

IN DAYS GONE BY.

Political Reminiscences of Some of New York's Well-Known Men.

Thomas Boese Describes the Birth and Christening of the Locooco Party.

Tammany Hall Illuminated with Brimstone Matches and Candles.

John Kelly's Famous Run for Congress Against Mike Walsh.

In the dim vista of past New York municipal politics there rises at times, to the memory of some of the older inhabitants, a youthful figure, but one of great prominence in its day.

It stands forth equally distinct on memory's pages with those other prominent figures of the time "Prince John" Van Buren, the courtly Lucius Robinson, Samuel J. Tilden, Fernando Wood, Augustus Schell, Wilson Small and the great Tammany leader, John Kelly.

All these are dead, but that other figure still remains a part and parcel of municipal politics, though no longer youthful.

Thomas Boese was born almost within the shadow of the City Hall and old Tammany Hall, then standing on the corner of Frankfort and Nassau streets.



"Little Spitting Snake" Boese, through the darkness.

His earliest associations were with politicians, for he lived in the very center of political activity, and every good American citizen was a thorough and active politician in those early days.

He witnessed and participated in most of the events since 1840, which have since become part of the city's political history.

Mr. Boese is probably the oldest officeholder in point of service in the municipality. Forty years ago he was clerk of the Common Pleas, and for many, many years he has been Chief Clerk of the Superior Court.

The Evening World reporter called on him in his office, high up in the new Court House, and asked him for a political reminiscence.

The result was wonderful. It was like disturbing a hive of bees. A flood of memories had been stirred within that pleasant gentleman's teeming brain, and soon there gushed forth such a stream of anecdotes as would delight a historian of New York politics.

Tammany Hall, the Locoocoos, the Barnburners, exciting campaigns, a personal and political history of Samuel J. Tilden, one of John Kelly and Tweed, his regime and his helpers in the work of plundering the city—all these and minor anecdotes concerning them tripped in rapid succession from Mr. Boese's tongue.

It would be manifestly unfair to a gentleman who has witnessed the rise and fall of politicians and himself participated in political affairs for nearly half a century, as has Mr. Boese, to confine his relation to one incident. He began his anecdotes with the birth of the Locooco party in 1837, and the incident which caused the party to be so queerly named.

"Wilson Small, who, until his death about two years ago, was a clerk in this office," began Mr. Boese, "was the leader of the original Locoocoos."

"It was merely a faction of Tammany Hall, which had become imbued with ideas somewhat similar to some held by the Farmers' Alliance of to-day. They were a sort of 'vote-yourself-a-farm,' 'down-with-banks-and-bank-notes' party."

"It was the usual fight between the Kiltstockers and the Silk-stockings in Tammany Hall, the latter bitterly opposing these new-fangled ideas."

"But the ideas were popular with the common people, and the young faction was strong."

"It had been meeting at Military Hall, and it proposed to be on hand at the grand ratification of candidates at Tammany Hall."

"In those days a ratification meeting meant something, and if a candidate was not endorsed he did not figure on the ticket."

"The Silk-stockings heard that the Military Hall people were to be at the meeting in force, and they were afraid of defeat, so they prepared a scheme to defeat the plan of the invaders."

"Illuminating gas had been in use but a short time then, but Tammany Hall was lighted with it."

"Matches had just been invented, but they were nothing but those long brimstone-covered sticks which required an outfit to light them! These matches were known as 'Lococoos.'"

In the majority, and would endorse their own candidate unless something was done.

"The gas was turned out accordingly, and the minority party made a rush for the door."



FRANCIS FINALLY AROUSED THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE.

"Agreeably to orders, Small's men remained seated, and soon there could be seen little spluttering blue sulphurous blazes breaking through the thick darkness. The 'Lococoos' were being lighted. The blue lights spread throughout the hall, to be quickly succeeded by the clear white light of the sperm-candled candles, which had been produced from pockets."

"In a few moments the hall was brilliantly illuminated, and Small and his friends had organized the meeting and introduced their candidates, while the silk-stockings, conspirators were standing outside and wondering at the cause of the phenomenon which had made their schemes miscarry."

"That was the birth of the Locoocoos. The fight was kept up in the Democratic ranks, and the Whigs won that year, but the next year Tammany adopted some of the new ideas, as well as the name, which stuck to it for years."

On flowed the tide of memory.

"Perhaps you'd like to hear how Tweed's Comptroller, Richard B. Connolly, first earned the title of 'Slippery Dick,'" suggested Mr. Boese.

He was assured that such a story would be listened to with pleasure and interest.

"Connolly was the Tammany candidate for County Clerk," he began.

"It was in the time when Know-Nothingism was rife; 1853 or 1855 I think."

"One of the men who was known as an active member of the American party, in fact a perfect crank of a Know-Nothing at that time, was Stephen H. Branch."

"Branch was a well-educated man, and taught some of the politicians of that day many things which they might have learned at school had they had the advantage of a schooling in their early years."

Among these was the late John Kelly, although Mr. Boese refrained from mentioning this fact in connection with his friend and fellow-fighter on many a political field.

"Branch," continued Mr. Boese, "first attained prominence through a wild tale he published of his trip across Nicaragua during the gold excitement in California."

"He told of alligators roosting in trees and other wonderful sights which would make a Bowers dime museum manager turn pale with envy."

"This is not to the purpose, though. We were talking about Dick Connolly and his candidacy for County Clerk."

"Well, this man Branch set about discovering that Connolly had never been naturalized—was not a citizen and not eligible to office."

"He found that there was no record of Connolly's citizenship, and had the fact published in the opposition press, and got Alderman Briggs, the Know-Nothing representative from the Thirtieth Ward, to bring the matter before the Board of Aldermen."

"Pretty hard matter to elect a Know-Nothing in the Thirtieth Ward now, eh?" remarked the story teller parenthetically.

"John Kelly was representing the Fourteenth Ward in the Board of Aldermen at the time, and to him Connolly sent a letter to be read at a meeting of the Board, in which he stumped as outrageous the stories regarding his non-citizenship. He declared that he had been naturalized in an obscure town in Pennsylvania and that his certificate of naturalization was 'the chief ornament of his parlor.'"

"Alderman Kelly read this letter, and waxed warm in a speech denouncing the detractors of Mr. Connolly. Mr. Kelly often referred to his indignant defense of 'Slippery Dick' in after life and laughed at the way he had been tricked."

"The indefatigable Branch was not to be balked of his purpose by that letter. He went to the Pennsylvania town named by Connolly. The records proved that Connolly had not been naturalized there, as he had affirmed."

"Then the investigator had the effrontery to go to Connolly's house, in the Seventh Ward, and ask to see his certificate of naturalization, 'the chief ornament of the parlor.'"

"It was not there."

"Election day came, and at the opening of the polls in Connolly's district Branch was on hand with a dinner-bucket ready for a day's labor."

"Should Connolly appear and offer to vote he was to be challenged as an alien."

"Connolly did not appear, and the incident was published as proof of his non-citizenship."

"The gentleman who so well won the title of 'Slippery Dick' replied to this with a newspaper card, to the effect that he had waged a small sum on the result of the election; that Branch knew it, and was ready to challenge him for that reason; that he could not get the other man to withdraw from the bet, and was thus deprived of his vote. He wound up his sacred THROUGH THE WEARY HOURS

Of many a night, made doubly long by its protest against the miserable sufferer to end to end on his sleepless couch, vainly praying for that rest which only comes by fits and starts. This is a story which ordinary readers too often fail to believe, but there is ample evidence to prove that the efficient blood purifier, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, affords the rheumatic a reliable means of relief. Check the malady in its incipient stages, when the first symptoms of trouble come on, with this agreeable medicine, and avoid years of torture. Whatever be the rationale of the active influence of Bitters upon this malady, certain it is that no evidence is so plain as the fact that it is more efficacious than any other remedy in its class. It is a pure, natural, and powerful blood purifier, and does not cause a single symptom of trouble. It is a truly remarkable medicine, and should be in the hands of all who are afflicted with rheumatism, indigestion and kindred diseases.

"Wilson Small learned this, and instructed his followers to prepare themselves with a candle each, and 'Lococoos' matches."

"The night of the meeting came, and it was evident that the Military Hall forces were

with a solemn warning to all good Democrats never to bet on election and thus lose their right of franchise.

The truth of the matter was that Connolly had been naturalized the night before election by a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and as a man has to be a citizen ten days before he can vote, 'Slippery Dick' did not go near the polls. His naturalization at that late date gave him the right to take the oath of office, however."

There was a parallel to 'Slippery Dick's' naturalization no later than 1880, but Mr. Boese could not be induced to talk about that, if he knew anything regarding it.

Mr. Boese followed his relation of the Connolly episode by advertising to the early political triumphs of John Kelly. He was one of the strongest friends and supporters that Kelly had in the days when the latter was demonstrating his ability as a leader of men, and was very close to him later when he had won his political spurs.

Mr. Boese was a candidate for the Assembly on the same ticket with Mr. Kelly, who was seeking election as Alderman in the fifth district.

"John Kelly's rise in politics dated from his overthrow of the power of that genius, Mike Walsh," remarked Mr. Boese.

"Kelly was born of Irish parents in New York, but was quite as American as men native to the soil. He was even known as 'the Irish Know Nothing.'"

"This appellation he secured because the Know Nothings, who were rampant in those days, withdrew their candidate for Aldermen in 1852, and elected Kelly over 'Irish Tom' Walshen."

"Of course, Mr. Kelly was a good Catholic, and he afterward, had the strong and earnest support of the people he defeated in 1852 and '54."

"His great battle was against Mike Walsh for Congress in 1854."

"The district at that time consisted of the Fourth, Sixth, Tenth and Fourteenth Wards."

"The Tenth Ward was strongly American, the Fourth and Sixth were Irish and the Fourteenth was divided. The region above Spring street was known as Gibraltar and below was called Quebec."

Gibraltar and the section around old St. Patrick's Cathedral, was controlled by Mike Walsh, while 'Quebec' was American or Irish-American in sentiment and favored Kelly."

"These distinctions will be better understood and appreciated if it is borne constantly in mind that Know-Nothingism was at the height at the time in question."

"Through the influence of Matt Brennan, afterwards Sheriff, John Clancy, who was later elected County Clerk, Peter B. Sweeney, Andrew and John Nesbitt in the Sixth Ward, Walsh secured the regular nomination for Congress."

"The Nesbitts run 'The Ivy Green,' a liquor store in Elm street, back of the Tomb, which was at that time as great a rendezvous for politicians as are the hotels on Madison square now."

"Kelly ran on an independent ticket, and the Know-Nothings supported him."

"It was one of the hottest fights I ever knew, and when the polls closed Kelly retired to the little wooden house in Mott street that he called home, thoroughly worn out and acknowledging his defeat."

"He wasn't defeated though. Stephen H. Branch, Kelly's very old friend, had visited Kelly's office in the district and secured the figures, which proved that Kelly was elected by 18 majority."

"Branch rushed up Mott street between 3 and 3 o'clock in the morning, shouting in the excess of his joy, 'Kelly's elected! Kelly's elected!'"

"He woke up the entire neighborhood, and finally aroused the successful candidate and told him the result, but said that it might be set aside if he did not act quickly, as Matt Brennan was waiting for full return at the Sixth Ward station house, where he was Captain, to see how much the returns had to be doctored to secure Walsh's election."

"Kelly was a man of wonderful strength—a regular bundle of muscles and utterly without fear. Gathering four of his trusted friends he proceeded with them to the station-house, where he found a noted pugilist, Johnny Ling, barring the entrance."

"Ling was like an infant in Kelly's grasp. He was sent flying into the street, and in marched the candidate and his friends."

Laura Jean Libbey.

WHOLESALE PLAGIARISM.

"Della's Handsome Lover," by Laura Jean Libbey, now being published in a weekly paper, is a story which is being distributed broadcast, is copied in part from "Willful Gaynell."

COMPARE THE FOLLOWING COLUMNS:

WILLFUL GAYNELL. Della's Handsome Lover.

Oh, how the lights and the glittering throng whirled about her, how the gay life of the city seemed to fall on her ears with a horrible crash.

She could see those around her gazing at her with such interest, she could hear the noisy exclamations of "Only a factory girl! Dear me! what in the world possessed her to get herself up like a lady and come here!"

Poor Gay! Poor, hapless little Gay! She shrunk cowering back like a wounded deer from the scornful, angry yells of the crowd, and she felt that she was a creature of the earth, and not a creature of the air.

Oh, why had she come? If she were only back in her little attic-room again!

Why had she come among this throng of beautiful people, why had she come to be soiled and jostled, and to be looked upon as a creature of the earth, and not a creature of the air?

Willful Gaynell.

MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE, Box 3643, 24 and 26 Vandewater Street, New York.

"In those days the returns were made to the Alderman of the Ward and a duplicate to the County Clerk."

Brennan had kept those for the Sixth Ward at the station-house until he received returns from the entire district, and they could have been readily changed to elect Walsh."

"Kelly had come in time though. He demanded that the pencil figures be written on in ink, so that any change could be discovered, and he enforced his demand."

Walsh proposed to contest Kelly's election, but thought better of the matter when it was shown that Walsh, although he had served one term in Congress, had never been naturalized."

"This election of Kelly was the beginning of his enduring strength as a leader."

"He was the favorite New York Congressman with President Pierce's Administration and secured the lion's share of patronage in the Custom-House, Post-Office and Navy-Yard."

"On this foundation of patronage he built the fabric of his political strength."

FROM THE WORLD OF LABOR.

For the miners of Alabama the Socialists have, so far, collected \$77.70.

Brooklyn Socialist Labor Party, Brooklyn, N. Y., has elected J. J. Walker, Treasurer.

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The Socialists of New York have elected a new Executive Committee this evening.

At a meeting of the representatives of thirty-eight Socialists of New York, held at the New York Hotel, on the 6th of February, the following were elected:

The Executive Committee of the New York Socialist Labor Party, New York, N. Y., has elected J. J. Walker, Treasurer.

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The Daily Continent

with its THIRTY-TWO PAGES and magnificent display of illustrations will be a "hummer." Here are some of the leading features:

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